Loans to Newspapers for modernisation and expansion

*98. SHRI T. CHANDRASEKHAR REDDY;

SHRI CHANDRIKA PRASAD TRIPATHI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued any guidelines to the Reserve Bank, various financial institutions and nationalised banks to give term loans to the newspaper industry for modernisation of equipment and for expansion;

(b) if so, what are the details of the guidelines issued in this regard;

(c) whether those guidelines are being followed by the above institutions and if so, what was the quantum of financial assistance rendered to the various groups of newspapers, newspaper-wise, during the last two years; and

(d) whether it is a fact that financial institutions refuse to give refinance to the nationalised banks which are prepared to give term-loans to newspapers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (c) Government have not issued any guidelines to Reserve Bank of India/financial institutions/nationalised banks regarding term loans to newspaper industry.

As per the extent policy all-India term lending financial institutions, do not extend direct rupee loane to large projects engaged in printing and publishing of newspapers. However, the institutions do extend facility of foreign currency loans to such projects for import of machinery. As regards indirect assistance, Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has Issued guidelines to primary lending institutions in March, 1985 that assistance to units engaged in printing and publishing of newspapers may be extended, subject to these units meeting the usual norms and guidelines under IDBI's Refinance Scheme for the following purposes:—

(i) Modernisation replacement needs of existing units under Bills Rtediscounting Scheme artd/or Refinance Scheme; and

(ii) Assistance to small viable projects in the industry under refinance scheme for new units as well as expansion of existing units;

Reserve Bank of India has reported that during the period 1st July, 1986 30th June, 1988, in respect of parties with aggregate term loans, deferred payment guarantees, etc. exceeding Rs. 1 crore, it has authorised banks to give a total of Rs. 8.49 crores by way of term loans and Rs. 4.54 crores by way of deferred payment guarantees. According to IDBI, all-India term lending institutions, have not extended any direct financial assistance to newspapers during the last 2 years. However, IDBI hag extended refinance assistance to units engaged in printing and publication of newspapers during 1986-87 and 1987-8S totalling rupees 8.25 crore6 and 5.08 crores respectively.

(d) IDBI has reported that it has not refused refinance assistance to credit institutions against their term loans to small newspaper units which are otherwise eligible nterms of guidelines issued to the primary lenders.

Setting up of environment courts

•99. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA- Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state;

(e) whether thete is a growing demand for the setting up of environment courts or tribunals to enable speedy disposal of environment related eases;

(b) whether the Supreme Court had also recommended in 1986 for the setting up of such courts;

(c) if so, what is Government's re-action thereto"; and

(d) by when such courts are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIJATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) The Supreme Court has suggested in a judgement in February, 1986 that environmental courts consisting of one professional judge and two experts drawn from ecological sciences research group be established in the country so that expert and technical knowledge can be applied when environment-related cases are decided and that right of appeal from the decisions of the environmental courts would lie to the Supreme Court.

(c) and (d) The question of setting up Environmental Courts has been examined by the Government. It was noted that:

(A) Environmental courts with judicial and exnert members as suggested by the Supreme Court have the merit of being capable of delivering quick and informed judgements in environmental cases;

, (B) However, establishment of such courts will be useful only if they ale established widelv through out the countrv so as to be accessible easily to the implementing agencies and the citizens;

(C) The number of environmental cases at present is too low to justifv the establishment of environmental courts in sufficient numbers; and

(D) With the increasing industrial ufrastructure and environmental awareness in the country, the number of cases will increase in the future but this will happen only if the implementing agencies are strengthened to detect violations of environmental laws. The Government has initiated scheme* for such strengthening.

In view of the above it is felt that the question of establishment of environmental courts could be considered after a period of 3 years based on the quantum of environmental litigation at that time.

Introduction of water pricing system for industries

•100. ISHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI K. V. THANGKABALU:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fart that during the Fourth Meeting of the Central Ganffa Authority it was decided to adoot a water pricing system which would serve as an incentive to the industries to conserve water and also to recvcle the same for maximum re-use; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) At the Fourth Meeting of the Central Ganga Authority the existing arrangements for charging for supply of water to industries were reviewed and the need to adopt a water pricing system which would serve as an incentive to industries to conserve water and recycle the same for maximum re-use stressed.

Transfers in the State Bank of Indore

704 SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the maximum period for which officers of the State Bank of Indore can remain posted continuously at its branches in Indore, Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi;